

History

# Bushrangers



## For Middle Primary

## Contents

Bushrangers 1 .....	Page 3
Bushrangers 2 .....	Page 4
John Donohoe .....	Page 5
Frank Gardiner .....	Page 6
Ben Hall .....	Page 7
Ned Kelly 1 .....	Page 8
Ned Kelly 2 .....	Page 9
Answers .....	Page 10

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## Activity

# Bushrangers 1

- Bushrangers were men who lived in the bush and robbed and killed other people to make a living.
- Most were declared 'outlaws' by the police. This gave any member of the public the power to kill them.
- Bushranging was common in Australia from 1790 to 1900.

**Bushrangers disguised themselves by winding scarves around their necks and faces. Some tied cotton around their heads with holes cut in for their eyes. Others blackened their faces.**

☐ Draw disguises on the bushrangers below.



☐ Look closely at the source below right. It shows how Harry Power, a well-known bushranger, was captured.

1. Who do you think is capturing him?

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2. What does the source tell us about Power and how he lived?

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CAPTURE OF POWER, THE BUSHRANGER—1860/61

National Library of Australia

## Activity

# Bushrangers 2

- Bushrangers used the term 'bail up' for 'stick 'em up' which was originally used to describe part of the process of fixing harnesses on bullock teams. It required a person to raise both arms to do up the straps.
- In the 1880s and 1900s, bushrangers began to die out. The increased number of colonies, more police, improvements in rail transport and communication technology, made it difficult for bushrangers to avoid being captured.



Historical source: National Library of Australia

☐ Look closely at the historical source above and answer the questions.

1. Which figure do you think is the bushranger?

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2. What is the bushranger doing?

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3. Is he portrayed as a villain or a hero in this picture?

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4. How are the townspeople reacting to the bushranger?

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5. What do you think of Australian bushrangers?

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- Many folk songs have been written about bushrangers.
- *The Wild Colonial Boy* is a bush ballad written about John Donohoe - a famous Irish bushranger.
- It can be treated as a secondary piece of evidence.

## *The Wild Colonial Boy*

*He was scarcely sixteen years of age when he left his father's home,  
And through Australia's sunny clime a bushranger did roam.  
He robbed those wealthy squatters, their stock he did destroy,  
And a terror to Australia was the Wild Colonial Boy.*

*In sixty-one this daring youth commenced his wild career,  
With a heart that knew no danger, no foeman did he fear.  
He stuck up the Beechworth mail-coach, and robbed Judge MacEvoy,  
Who trembled, and gave up his gold to the Wild Colonial Boy.*



- ☐ Read the ballad and answer the questions.

1. List Donohoe's crimes.

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2. What line tells you that he was feared?

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3. What are we told about his character?

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4. Why do you think he was known as the wild colonial boy?

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## Activity

# Frank Gardiner

- Frank Gardiner became a bushranger in 1861.
- He was responsible for holding up coaches on highways and became known as 'King of the Road'.
- He was most wanted for the Eugowra Coach Robbery because he and his gang stole £28,000.
- After this robbery he escaped to Queensland but was captured and served 10 years in gaol. The gold was never found.

☐ Create a wanted poster for Gardiner.

**WANTED**

**Preview**

**Crime(s):**

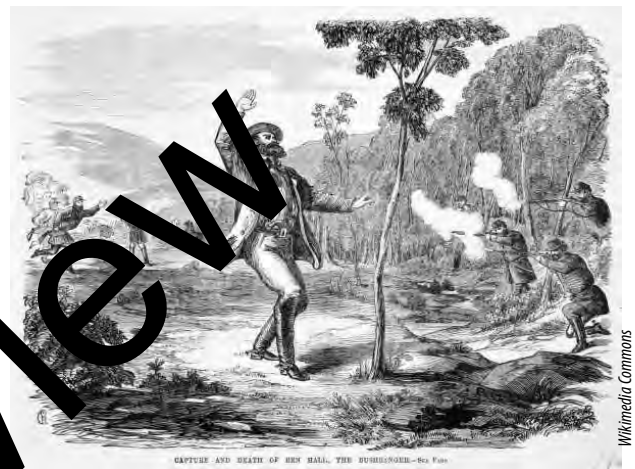
**REWARD**

## Activity

# Ben Hall

- Ben Hall was born to convict parents in 1837.
- He took part in the infamous Eugowra Coach Robbery with the bushranger Frank Gardiner.
- He was also responsible for raids on towns, banks, stores and inns in the Lachlan Plains area.

☐ Look at the source. What does it show happened to Ben Hall?



- ☐ Imagine that you were at one of the banks that Hall raided. Create two secondary sources by describing the event and creating an illustration to capture the events. Continue writing on the back of this sheet if you need more room.





## Activity

# Ned Kelly 1

- Ned Kelly is the most well-known and possibly best loved bushranger in Australian history.
- He was born in 1854 in Victoria.
- His father, John 'Red' Kelly, was an ex-convict from Ireland who was transported to Australia for stealing two pigs.
- His mother, Ellen Kelly, was also born in Ireland and migrated to Melbourne in 1841.

☐ Complete Ned Kelly's birth certificate.

***Certificate of Birth***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preview**



- Ned Kelly had his first brush with the law at 14 in 1869. He was arrested for assaulting a Chinese farmer and spent ten days in gaol.
- The next year he was gaoled for three years for possessing a stolen horse.
- In October 1878, Ned killed three policemen at Stringybark Creek. He was captured and hanged on November 11th in 1880 aged 25.

☐ Complete Ned Kelly's criminal record.

Age/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Age/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Crime(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Crime(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Charges: \_\_\_\_\_

Charges: \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity

# Ned Kelly 2

- Ned Kelly is fondly remembered by many Australians.
- Many people believe that the police victimised him and unfairly blamed him for anything that went wrong in the town.
- He is often referred to as an 'Aussie battler' who stood up to authorities.

☐ Look at Source 1 below right.

1. When Ned Kelly was captured where do you think the police shot him?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you think would have been the advantages of wearing this armour?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What do you think would have been the disadvantages of wearing this armour?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Source 1: Ned Kelly's Homemade armour



Source 2: Wikimedia Commons

☐ Look closely at Source 2.

4. What does it tell us about Ned Kelly?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Answers

### Page 3

1. From looking at the source, students might deduce that members of the public are capturing Power as they are dressed in plain clothes.
2. Students may claim that the source tells us that Power was a wanted man and that the reward for his capture was a high figure. Other responses may be that Power hid in derelict sheds and outbuildings and lived in basic conditions. The saddle suggests he travelled by horse and his gun tells us that he was armed.

### Page 4

1. Students should identify the bushranger as the figure on the horse.
2. The bushranger is holding up a small village/he is shooting at the townspeople and looks to have already shot the man on the floor. He is creating fear and terror in the townspeople suggested by the figure seen inside the house and the other man waving his arms in despair.
3. The bushranger is portrayed as a villain.
4. The townspeople are petrified of the bushranger. Most are trying to escape from him. One man is unable to escape possibly due to an injury.

### Page 5

1. The poem cites Donohoe's crimes as robbing the wealthy, destroying their stock and holding up a mail-coach to rob Judge MacEvoy.
2. The line, 'And a terror to Australia' was the 'Wild Colonial Boy' tells us that he was feared.
3. We are told that he was 'dark', 'knew no danger' and feared nobody 'no foeman did he fear'.
4. He was probably referred to as 'wild' because he did not obey the law and was rebellious. 'Colonial boy' means that he lived in colonial times.

### Page 7

Students should deduce that Ben Hall was a wanted man and that he was eventually shot by a team of police suggested by the many uniformed men with firearms in the source. The source implies that Hall was shot in the back and had little chance of escape. When he died he was running away from the police and did not have time to draw his own firearm and fire back, which may suggest that the police took him by surprise.

After they have responded to the source tell them that on May 5th, 1865 Ben Hall was tricked by a "friend" who had offered him shelter. Mick Connolly was tempted by the £2,000 reward and told police of

Hall's whereabouts. The police gunned Hall down but as he lay on the ground, Hall asked a former friend, Billy Dargin, to shoot him dead as he did not want the police to take him alive. It was thought that there were at least 30 bullets in his body.

### Page 8

#### Certificate of Birth

**Name:** Ned Kelly  
**Date of Birth:** 1854  
**Place of Birth:** Victoria  
**Nationality:** Australian  
**Gender:** Male  
**Father:** John 'Red' Kelly  
**Nationality:** Irish  
**Mother:** Ellen Kelly  
**Nationality:** Irish

#### Criminal Record

**Age/Year:** 14 years of age in 1869  
**Crime(s):** Assaulting a Chinese farmer  
**Charges:** Ten days in gaol  
**Age/Year:** 1870  
**Crime(s):** Possessing a stolen horse  
**Charges:** Three years in gaol  
**Age/Year:** October 1878  
**Crime(s):** Killing three policemen  
**Charges:** Hanged

### Page 9

1. The police could have shot Ned Kelly in the arms or legs because these are the parts that his armour did not cover.
2. Ned Kelly's armour would have protected most of his body during the many battles in which he was involved.
3. The armour weighed 90lbs so may have been heavy to wear and restricted mobility and speed in certain circumstances.
4. It tells us that Ned Kelly was a man who was in trouble with the law and appeared in court to face criminal charges.